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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9057
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2012
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5487
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9083
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6659
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 4470
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2463
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000329

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP AND IO; PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/03/2019

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SUBJECT: BURMA: ASSK CLOSING ARGUMENTS LIKELY TO BE
POSTPONED AGAIN

REF: RANGOON 324

Classified By: Political Officer Sean K. O'Neill for Reasons 1.4 (b) &
(d)

11. (SBU) Aung San Suu Kyi's (ASSK) lawyers have told us they expect closing arguments in her trial, currently scheduled for June 5, to be postponed; the session had already been delayed once from its original June 1 date. Lawyers confirmed that the Rangoon Divisional Court (an appeals court) has agreed to consider the appeal by ASSK's lawyers of the District Court's denial of three defense witnesses, thus requiring a further postponement. ASSK's lawyers will appear at the Divisional Court June 5 to argue their appeal. They did not speculate as to when the Divisional Court would rule or when closing arguments would eventually take place.

12. (C) ASSK's personal attorney, Kyi Win (aka Neville), has told us that he still does not know why authorities initially postponed the closing arguments, but noted that the delay will actually help defense attorneys strengthen their case.

Comment

13. (C) We have been struck from the beginning of the ASSK/Yettaw trial by the effort of the court to follow reasonably rigorous criminal-procedure rules, a rigor which we hear is seldom the case in most politically-sensitive criminal trials here. The Divisional Court's acceptance of an appeal could be simply more evidence of such procedural rigor in this high-visibility case. Another possibility is that the sudden slow-down in the trial's pace, after an earlier effort to speed toward conclusion, is intended to give the regime's senior leadership time to reevaluate options, given the extent of global outcry. Cynical observers still figure the most likely result is some sort of continued detention for ASSK; but the delay does offer a glimmer of hope.
DINGER